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ABSTRACT

This brief overview of the Pinellas County, Florida, Latchkey program for school-age children initially discusses the background of the project and states program goals and objectives. The operation's organizational structure is delineated. Discussion then focuses on site development, interrelationship with the public school system, developmental components of the Latchkey curriculum, and the cost effectiveness of the services provided. Concluding remarks provide a brief report of the Latchkey Task Force's needs assessment survey. (RH)

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LATCHKEY

A MODEL SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

OPERATED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

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LATCHKEY SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The increased number of working mothers, the growing number of single-parent families, and decline of the "extended family" are only a few of the dramatic changes that have created the "latchkey problem" which is presently facing our nation and its communities. Today these unsupervised youngsters numbering in the millions, constitute one of the real areas of concern in our society. The magnitude of need for school-age child care is rapidly gaining the attention of educators, law enforcement personnel, community leaders, and government officials.

BACKGROUND

Efforts to establish services for school age children in Pinellas County Florida started in early 1975. An elementary school principal saw and began to document the needs of the "latchkey" child. Representatives from the Juvenile Welfare Board and Pinellas County License Board for Children's Centers and Family Day Care Homes coordinated the involvement of other community groups and individuals, (i.e. public school system and churches).

The LATCHKEY Task Force had conducted a Needs Assessment Survey through the Department of School Social Work (Pinellas County School Board) in March of 1976. The results of this survey indicated that parents of 15,500 children between the ages of 5 and 12 needed day care for their children. Factors which impact on the increasing need for school age child care include:

1. The increased number of crimes involving children.
2. The increase in drug and alcohol abuse among children.
3. The decline in the availability of the "extended family" to provide care.

Through the cooperation of the Pinellas County School System, Juvenile Welfare Board and tremendous community support, added to a "coffee can" petty cash of $27.90, the agency began two school age day care programs in June of 1976. From this point the agency not only grew in size of budget, but in services equivalent to the increase in budget. This growth clearly proves the need for LATCHKEY programs.

The following provides basic information concerning our program.

- Established in Pinellas County in May 1976 by a community Task Force.
- LATCHKEY, Inc. is a private non-profit organization.
- LATCHKEY is operated under the auspices of a Board of Directors, representing the community.
- LATCHKEY has been identified as a national model for school-age child care.
- LATCHKEY operates in two Florida county school systems.
- Pinellas & Pasco County School Systems provide space at no cost. Compensation is given through a lease process for all actual costs incurred. (i.e. utilities).
- Funding is provided by:

  State Subsdidized Child Care (Title XX)
  Juvenile Welfare Board
  Pinellas County United Way
  Pasco County United Way
  Pasco County Revenue Sharing
  City of St. Petersburg Revenue Sharing
  St. Petersburg Trust Revenue
  Pinellas County Revenue Sharing
  USDA (Department of Education)
  City of Clearwater
  Community Development - Clearwater
  Community Development - St. Petersburg

PURPOSE AND GOALS

LATCHKEY is a community-based developmental child care program. LATCHKEY endeavors to provide a well-defined, high-quality program which is developmental, preventative, enriching, and supplemental to the family, school and the community. LATCHKEY provides developmental day care for infant, preschool, and school-age children. The Agency's goals include:

1. To provide comprehensive supervised child care that will have an in-depth impact on the total well being of children and families by allowing for:

   A. The employability of parents.
   B. The economic stability of the family
   C. A positive experience for children in terms of care, education and self-development.

2. To provide opportunities for development of the child in the areas of:

   A. Health and nutrition
   B. Motor competency & physical development
   C. Cognitive skills
   D. Socialization
   E. Creative endeavors
   F. Self-identity and self-worth
   G. Worthy use of leisure time

3. To reduce the acts of juvenile delinquency by:

   A. Providing an environment supervised by trained adults.
   B. Providing constructive alternatives for more appropriate use of leisure time.

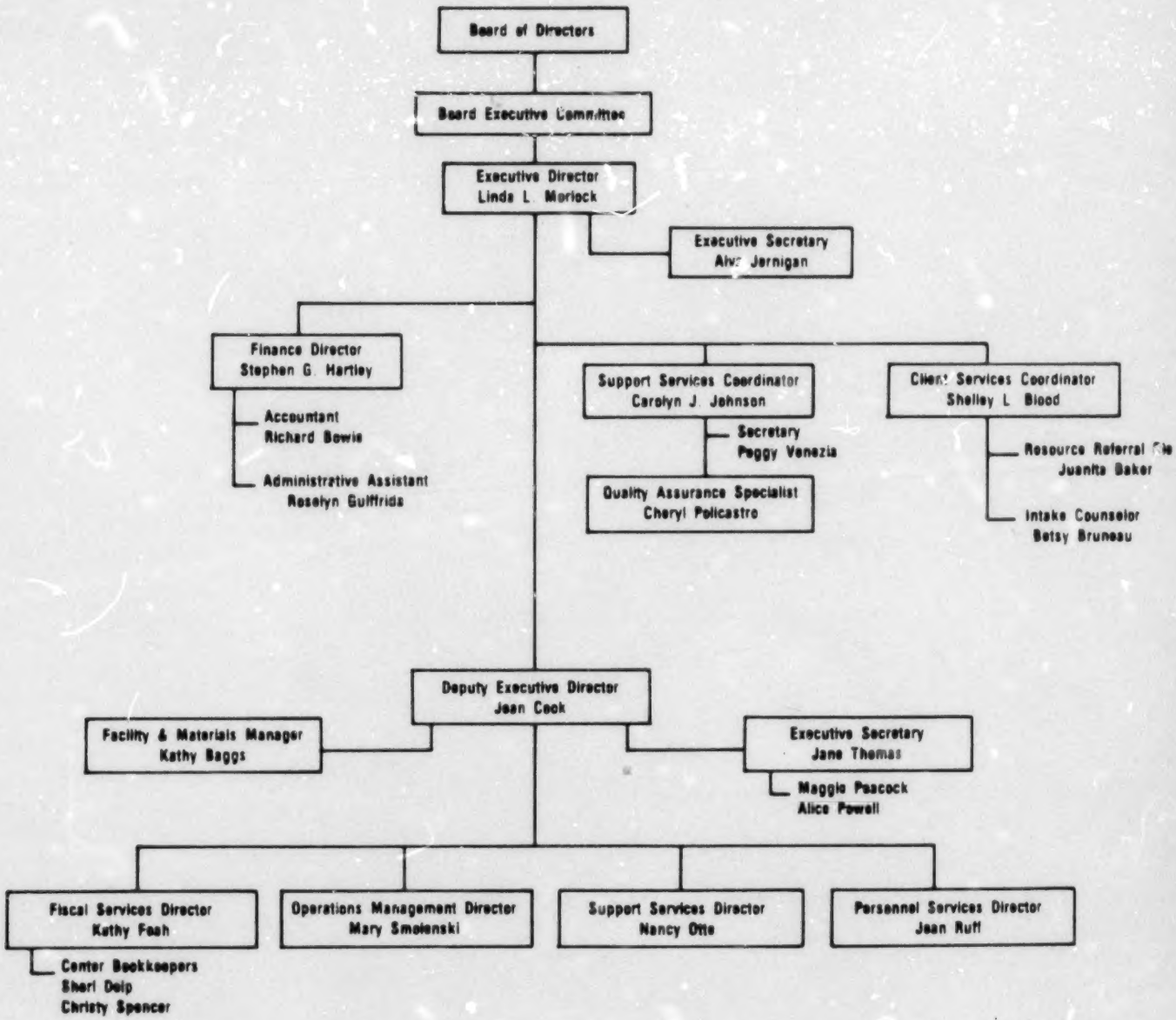
4. To support and strengthen the family unit by:

   A. Acting as a liason between family and school.
   B. Providing opportunities for parents to participate in constructive activities with their children.
   C. Acting as a family advocate through a support system which provides resources concerning family needs.
   D. Providing opportunties for parent growth, in areas which build understanding of child behavior.
   E. Allowing the parents to have a feeling of confidence that their children are well cared for while they work.

5. To carry out research and evaluation regarding child care in order to:

   A. Continually upgrade the services provided.
   B. Take a leadership role in family and child advocacy.
   C. Provide for systematic evaluation of all above stated goals and objectives.

Organizational Structure
LATCHKEY Services for Children, Inc.



LATCHKEY OPERATIONS' STRUCTURE

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS STRUCTURE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Administration & Coordination of the Agency
- Development & Negotiation of Funding Sources
- Supervision of Central Administration Departments
- State and National Advocacy

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Secretarial Support to Executive Director
- Coordination of CA Records
- Technical Assistance
- Secretary/Board of Directors

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- Coordination & Supervision of Fiscal Operations
- Budget Development & Analysis
- Accounting Process
- Payroll Process
- Systems Evaluation

SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATOR

- Education/Training Coordination & Supervision
- Monitoring/Quality Assurance Coordination
- Consultive Services
- Research & Development
- Resource & Materials Development

CLIENT SUPPORT COORDINATOR

- Coordination & Supervision of Client Services
- Coordination of Subcontract Centers
- Client Needs Assessment
- Collection & Analysis of Statistical Data
- Information & Referral

DIRECT SERVICE OPERATIONS STRUCTURE

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Coordination of Office Operations
- Secretarial Support to Deputy Executive Director
- Coordination of DS Records
- Monitoring of Records
- Evaluation of Records
- Technical Assistance

Administration & Coordination of DS Operations

- Public Relations
- Community Advocacy
- Departmental Supervision

FACILITY & MATERIALS MANAGER

- Purchasing of Equipment and Supplies
- Inventory Control
- Obtain and Maintain Facility
- Coordinate Food Supplies/Vendors
- Client Recruitment Support (flyers, posters, etc.)

OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR

- Supervision
- Problem Solving
- Management Training
- Management Monitoring
- Management Evaluation

PERSONNEL SERVICES DIRECTOR

- Administration & Coordination of Personnel Policies and Procedures
- Personnel Recruitment
- Personnel Placement
- Personnel Resource
- Personnel Records

FISCAL SERVICES DIRECTOR

- System Designing
- Bookkeeping Process
- Daily Fiscal Processes
- Fiscal Monitoring
- Fiscal Evaluation
- Fiscal Technical Assistance

SUPPORT SERVICES DIRECTOR

- Orientation of New Staff
- Program Training
- Program Monitoring
- Program Evaluation
- Program Technical Assistance
- Curriculum Development
- Educational Resource

ELEMENTS OF THE SACC PROGRAM

The elements or features of the program are as follows:

1. The program is designed to offer meaningful and purposeful experiences to meet the physical, social, emotional, and mental needs of the child aged 5 to 12.

2. The program strengthens and supports the care and guidance of the family.

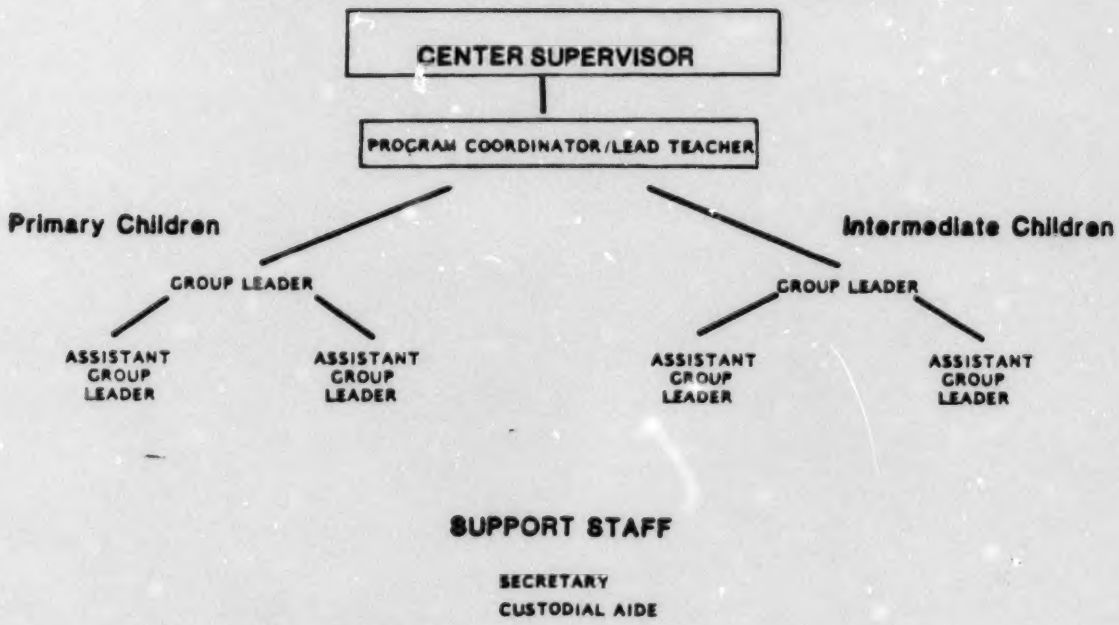
3. The program enhances and enriches what the school offers by providing a variety of learning experiences in a more informal environment and with an integrated approach.

4. The program adds to or supplements available community resources dealing with problems associated with unsupervised youth.

5. The program is designed to provide quality child care in a healthy, safe and nuturing environment.

CENTER ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CENTER ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



SITE DEVELOPMENT

Sites are developed based on the following factors:

- Need for services in the area - requests, survey of school under consideration and statistical data drawn from the LATCHKEY Needs Assessment.
- Financial feasibility - blend of subsidized and full-fee clients, 75 children per center necessary.
- Appropriate space - adequate indoor and outdoor space based on the number of children, plus office space and storage space for equipment and supplies.
- Community support - positive attitudes, school and LATCHKEY staff interaction, parent support.

NOTE: It is not the intent of LATCHKEY to overlap existing services but to develop services in areas of unmet need.

INTER-RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

- LATCHKEY provides custodial help for maintenance of the areas used by the LATCHKEY program.
- No public school monies are used for the provision of services.
- In-kind services are provided in the use of space with no rental or space cost.
- Utilities and custodial supplies are paid for by LATCHKEY based on actual usage (wattage and amount of supplies) as developed by the Principal and a LATCHKEY representative.
- The Principal has no direct responsibility for the program, but acts in a coordinating role.
- LATCHKEY provides liability insurance naming each school site as an additional insured.

THE LATCHKEY SACC CURRICULUM

The program of activities provided by LATCHKEY was developed from and designed to enhance the following philosophy, objectives, and conceptual framework:

1. Program Philosophy

   Our philosophy enbraces the principles set down in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, with special emphasis being placed on the promotion of the dignity and worth of the human person.

2. LATCHKEY Program Objectives

   A. Through an integrated and indirect approach each child is given the opportunity to experience success, learn new concepts, and to develop to his/her fuliest potential in all three domains (psycho-motor, percepto-cognitive and psycho-social).

   B. Through a humanistic approach, each child is given opportunities to develop a positive self-concept, to appreciate individual differences, and to improve self-control.

   C. Through varied program each child is given the opportunity to belong to a group, to develop his/her uniqueness, to share, to experience freedom of choice, to learn new skills, develop new interests, and enhance basic academic skills.

   D. Through planned sequential learning tasks, each child is allowed to progress at his/her own rate.

   E. Through the utilization of indirect strategies (exploration, problem solving, and guided discovery), each child is allowed to experience different forms of self-expression, to become an independent learner, and to gain a sense of responsibiltiy.

   F. Through expanded program activities each child is given opportunities to develop real life and homemaking skills and to enrich the cultural, recreational and social experiences.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The LATCHKEY curriculum is formulated from six major developmental components:

1. Self Identity and Self Worth
2. Socialization
3. Motor Competence
4. Cognitive Processing
5. Creative Expressing
6. Recreational Pursuits

These conceptual components build the framework for developmental child care programs for children from 5-12 years of age. Activities are chosen for placement within the curriculum based on the following criteria:

1. Developmental appropriateness
2. Show a logical progression or sequence.
3. Allow for maximum participation and concrete experience.
4. Allow for creativity.
5. Build depth and balance; add variety to the program.

The program of activities at each LATCHKEY center is planned and developed to provide a well-balanced and varied curriculum which emphasizes the six components. The approach to programming is interdisciplinary and the methods utilized in presentation are primarily "in-direct" strategies (exploration, problem solving, guided-discovery, etc.). Center Supervisors and Program Coordinators are trained and provided with support services from LATCHKEY's Administrative unit in carrying out their programs (A sample daily schedule is attached). Each site is also monitored regularly (at least four times a year) for program depth and quality. LATCHKEY has developed a Quality Assurance Assessment which is utilized for this purpose.

COST/EFFECTIVENESS OF LATCHKEY SCHOOL-AGE SERVICES

The Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services has applauded our model for School Age Child Care as not only very high quality, but as being extremely cost effective. Our established relationship with the Pasco and Pinellas County School Boards and Administrations is the basis of this action.

A typical Annual Budget to operate a SACC program is public school facilities.*

Salaries and Fringe	$58,628	
Program Expenses	6,952	Serves 75
In-kind/volunteer contributions	11,500	Children

* The above cost does not include Central Administration.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

Abbreviated Morning/Extended Afternoon Program

TIME	ACTIVITY	TYPE OF EXPERIENCES	EMPHASIS
7:00 - 7:30	Supervised Indoor Activity Centers (Unstructured or Semi-Structured)	Welcome/Check-in, Manipulative play, table games, cards, reading, homework, quiet games, etc.	Recreational Pursuits Socialization Fine Motor Competence Cognitive Processing
7:30 - 8:15	Indoor-Outdoor Activity Centers (Structured or Semi-structured)	Crafts, music, drama, organized games and sports, specific sport skills drills in station-to-station method, etc.	Motor Competence (Gross & Fine) Socialization Creative Expression
8:15 - 8:30	Transition	Clean-up, prepare to go to class, check-out, Kindergarten drop-off.	
2:30 - 3:00	Supervised, unstructured outdoor free play	Welcome/Check-in, Large muscle activity, involving chasing-fleeing games and playground apparatus play	Motor Competence Socialization
3:00 - 3:15	Snack	Table conversation, assembly-type activity such as "show & tell", group singing, individual performances and entertainment, announcements, etc.	Socialization Creative Expression Self Identity/Worth
3:15 - 4:00	Enrichment Period I (Minimum of one structured, teacher-directed and one structured activity center)	Groups of appropriate size and composition actively participate in experiences from the six component areas. Presented in units, using themes, or the "mini-mod" approach. Choice of activities based on LATCHKEY curriculum guidelines.	All Component Areas except Recreational (Percentages)
4:00 - 4:45	Enrichment Period II (Same as above)	Groups, subject matter or staff rotates so that all children receive group and individual experiences from additional component areas	All Component Areas except Recreational (Percentages)
4:45 - 5:15	Clubs, Teams, Homework assistance or Free Play	Interest groups or "club" activities which are student initiated and oriented. Choice time for homework or free play.	All Component Areas Focus: Recreational Pursuits
5:15 - 5:30	Transition	Quiet games, group singing, stories, clean-up/put away. Prepare to go home, check-out.	

The daily routine for children flows as follows:

- Parent brings child to LATCHKEY School Site at 7:00 a.m.
- Enrichment program and breakfast.
- School begins for child's educational experience
- After school child returns to LATCHKEY.
- Parent picks up child at 5:30 p.m.

REPORT OF THE LATCHKEY TASK FORCE

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The LATCHKEY Task Force of Pinellas County, composed of representatives of many community services such as the Juvenile Welfare Board, the Girl Scouts, the County Health Department, the Pinellas County School System, the P.T.A., Parks and Recreation, and several church organizations, is seeking to provide programs throughout the county for children of working parents who need supervised programs and activities before school, and after school, and during the summer.

In order to substantiate the need for such programs and to identify specific target areas where the demand for LATCHKEY programs would be the greatest, a Needs Assessment Survey was conducted by the Pupil Services Department of the Pinellas County School System under the direction of Dr. Fred Hoffman, Director of Pupil Services, and Mr. Glenn Kranzow, Supervisor of School Social Work.

Surveys were delivered to the elementary and middle schools by the school social workers and were carried home by 64,000 students. Approximately 25,000 were returned and close to 6,000 of those returned contained extensive personal comments, many of which gave strong testimony to the need for LATCHKEY type programs. Many parents offered to help establish such programs and to assist in their operation.

Numerous working parents indicated concern for their younger children who were often left on their own or under inadequate supervision. 10,720 parents of children in the age range of 5 - 12 years answered "yes" to the question, "Do you often need supervision for your child(ren) before or after school?" In addition to these "yes" responses, we correlated the number of "no" responses of parents with children in the 5 - 12 age range who also said child(ren) cares for self during periods before or after school. These totals added to the 10,720 "yes" responses amounted to 15,442. It can therefore be assumed that approximately one-fourth of the student population in the age range of 5 - 12 are potential LATCHKEY children.

The survey questionnaire asked parents to indicate what school building was located closest to where they live so that we were able to identify the need for LATCHKEY programs with neighborhood school facilities which might be utilized. The following is a breakdown of the number of potential users of these programs with their neighborhood schools.

NUMBERS OF FAMILIES IN NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL AREAS WHO MIGHT UTILIZE THE LATCHKEY PROGRAM FOR ONE OR MORE OF THEIR CHILDREN AGED 5 - 12. THESE WERE IDENTIFIED BY THE LATCHKEY COUNTY-WIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED BY THE PUPIL SERVICES DEPARTMENT - PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM - MARCH 12, 1976

497	Campbell Park	186	Gulf Beaches	83	North Shore
480	Bauder	178	Lakewood	83	Ozona
444	Ridgecrest	172	King's Highway	80	Palm Harbor
373	Skyview	172	Palmetto	80	Palm Harbor Middle
367	Anona	171	Skycrest	80	Safety Harbor
361	Bardmoor	168	San Jose	79	Azalea
340	Mildred Helms	163	Mt. Vernon	79	Cross Bayou
303	Seminole	160	Westgate	68	Pasadena
297	Eisenhower	159	Bay Vista	67	Largo Central
290	Pinellas Park	156	Oldsmar	66	Jordan
287	Blanton	151	Melrose	60	Curtis
283	Starkey	146	George Perkins	59	St. Pete Sr. High
278	Lakeview	142	OakGrove Mid.	50	South Ward
275	Belcher	138	Dunedin Middle	50	Woodlawn
268	Dunedin	137	Clearview	48	Gibbs Sr. High
264	High Point	138	Orange Grove	40	Walsingham
249	Shore Acres	137	Sunset Hills	37	Madeira Beach Middle
248	Oakhurst	136	Sixteenth St.	36	Azalea Middle
242	Rio Vista	133	Gulfport	36	South Side Altern.
238	Ponce de Leon	132	Fifty-Fourth Ave.	33	Disston Middle
234	Safety Harbor	128	Tarpon Springs	26	Clearwater Comp. Mid.
230	Fairmont Park	126	Bay Point Middle	24	Tarpon Springs Middle
223	Lealman	125	Sandy Lane	22	Meadowlawn
221	Seventy-Sourth St.	119	Baypoint	20	Dixie Hollins Sr.
217	Maximo	117	North Ward-Clw.	16	Clw. Except. Child
212	Tyrone	115	Pinellas Central	16	Dunedin Sr. High
215	Child's Park	113	Kennedy Middle	15	Tyrone Middle
197	Plumb	105	Bear Creek	14	Boca Ciega Sr. High
193	Fuguitt	101	Riviera Middle	11	Forest Hills
192	Belleair	93	North Ward-St.Pete	11	Northeast Sr. High
188	George Lynch	93	Pinellas Park Mid.	10	Tarpon Springs Ex. Child Center
188	Madeira Beach	91	Norwood		
187	Wildwood	89	Northwest		

(Less than 10 not reported)